

T H E CHARTER and GRANTS OF THE COMPANY of STATIONERS.

With Observations and Remarks thereon.

N. B. The Charter and Grants are printed from a Book published by M^{rs}. O, O & N. in 1741

To the Freemen of the Company of Stationers.

Gentlemen,

THE design of the following pages is to lay before you, copies of your Charters and Grants, together with such observations and remarks thereon, which naturally arise from an attentive perusal of them; and it is humbly presumed, that no other apology for this undertaking will be thought necessary.

The Charter granted to the Company of Stationers, May 4, 1556.
in the third and fourth of Philip and Mary.

The King and Queen to all those to whom these presents shall come, greeting,

I. **K** Now ye that we considering and manifestly perceiving that several seditious and heretical books both in verse and prose are daily published, stamped and printed by divers scandalous, schismatical and heretical persons, not only exciting our subjects and liegemen to sedition and disobedience against us, our crown and dignity, but also to the renewal and propagating very great and detestable heresies against the faith and sound catholic doctrine of holy mother, the church; and being willing to provide a proper remedy in this case,

II. We of our own special favour, certain knowledge and mere motion do will, give and grant for ourselves, our heirs and successors of the abovementioned queen to our beloved and faithful liegemen,

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| (The Master) | Michael Ubley | Roger Ireland |
| Thomas Dockwray | John Jaques | Richard Crosse |
| (The Keepers or | William Ryddall | Thomas Powell |
| Wardens) | John Hudson | Anthony Crosse |
| John Cawood | John Walley | Richard Hyll |
| Henry Coke | Thomas Duxwell | Alen Gamlyn |
| (The Freemen or | Anthony Smith | Henry Norton |
| Commonalty) | William Powell | Richard Lant |
| William Bonham | Richard Jugge | Henry Luttrell |
| Richard Waye | William Serreys | Andrew Hertes |
| Simon Coston | Robert Holder | Thomas Devell |
| Reynold Wolf | Thomas Purfoot | John Case |
| James Hollyland | John Rogers | William Hyll |
| Stephen Keval | William Steward | Richard Richardson |
| John Turke | Richard Patchet | Giles Hicke |
| Nicholas Taberner | Nicholas Borman | John Kynge |

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| John Fairbarne | Thomas Sawyer | Richard Baldwyn |
| John Hyll | Charles Walley | Richard Grene |
| Peter Frenche | Thomas Patenson | Thomas Byden |
| Richard Harrison | Thomas Mershe | Robert Bauborne |
| Humphry Powell | Richard Tottell | John Alday |
| John Clerke | Rolph Tyer | Robert Blyth |
| William Copland | John Burtofte | George Brodehead |
| William Marten | William Griffith | Hugh Cotisfurth |
| Thomas Parker | Edward Brouce | Richard Wallis |
| John Bonham | Nicholas Clifton | Thomas Gee |
| John Gough | Richard Harvy | Richard Kevell, junr |
| John Daye | James Gunwell | John Shereman |
| John Whitney | Edward Cator | Thomas Skerroll |
| Simon Spylman | John Kele | Owen ap Roger |
| William Baldwyn | Thomas Bylton | John Tyddale |
| William Coke | Thomas Maskall | Adam Croke, and |
| John Kevell | William Norton | John Fox, |
| Robert Broke | William Pyckeryng | (In all 97. |

Freemen of the mystry or art of a Stationer of our city of London and suburbs thereof, that henceforth they may be in deed, fact and name one body of itself for ever, and one society corporated for ever with one master and two keepers or wardens in the society of the same mystry or art of a Stationer of the city aforesaid, and that they may enjoy a perpetual succession.

III. And further we of our own special favour, certain knowledge and mere motion do by these presents ordain, create, erect, make and constitute the foresaid Thomas Dockwray the master of the same mystry or art of a Stationer of the foresaid city for one year next ensuing; and the foresaid John Cawood and Henry Cooke the keepers or wardens of the same mystry or art of a Stationer of the foresaid city for one year next ensuing; and we by these presents do make, create and constitute the foresaid William Bonham, Richard Way, Simon Coston, Reynold Wolf, James Hollyland, Stephen Keval, John Turke, Nicholas Taberner, Michael Ubley, John Jaques, William Ryddall, John Hudson, John Walley, Thomas Duxwell, Anthony Smith, William Powell, Richard Jugge, William Serryes, Robert Holder, Thomas Purfet, John Rogers, William Steward, Richard Patchet, Nicholas Borman, Roger Ireland, Richard Crosse, Thomas Powell, Anthony Crosse, Richard Hyll, Alen Gamlyn, Henry Norton, Richard Lant, Henry Luttell, Andrew Hertes, Thomas Devell, John Case, William Hyll, Richard Richardson, Giles Huckle, John Kynge, John Fayrbarne, John Hyll, Peter Frenche, Richard Harrison, Humphry Powell, John Clerke, William Copland, William Marten, Edward Sutton, Thomas Parker, John Bonham, John Gough, John Daye, John Whitney, Simon Spylman, William Baldwyn, William Coke, John Keval, Robert Broke, Thomas Sawyer, Charles Walley, Thomas Patenson, Thomas



Thomas Merfhe, Richard Tottell, Ralph Tyer, John Burtofte, William Griffith, Edward Broune, Nicholas Clyfton, Richard Harvy, Thomas Gunwell, Edward Cator, John Kele, Thomas Bylton, Thomas Maskall, William Norton, William Pyckeryng, Richard Baldwyn, Richard Grene, Thomas Byden, Robert Badborne, John Alday, Robert Blythe, George Brodehead, Hugh Cotisfurth, Richard Mallevs, Thomas Gee, Richard Kevell, jun. John Shereman, Thomas Skerroll, Owen ap Roger, John Tyfdale, Adam Croke, and John Foxe the commonalty of the same mystery or art of a Stationer of the city aforesaid.

IV. And further we ordain, create, erect, make and constitute by these presents the foresaid master and keepers or wardens and commonalty one body in deed and name of themselves for ever, and one society for ever corporate with one master and two keepers or wardens and the commonalty of the same mystery or art of a Stationer of the city of London aforesaid. And we do incorporate the same master, keepers or wardens and commonalty, and by these presents we do really and fully will, grant, create, erect, ordain, make, declare and constitute the said master and keepers or wardens and commonalty a body corporate to continue for ever by the name of the master and keepers or wardens and commonalty of the mystery or art of a Stationer of the city of London: and that the same master and keepers or wardens and commonalty may from henceforward have a perpetual succession: and that the same master and keepers or wardens and commonalty and their successors for ever may be called, entitled and called by the name of the master and keepers or wardens and commonalty of the mystery or art of a Stationer of the city of London: and that they may be able to plead and be impleaded, to answer and to be answered by that name in all and singular matters, suits and plains, actions, demands and causes before any of our judges and justices whomsoever in any courts or places whatsoever: and that they may have a common seal to serve and to be used for their affairs and business; and for the sealing of all and singular their deeds and writings any wise touching or concerning their affairs and business.

V. And that the same master and keepers or wardens and commonalty and their successors may from time to time make and ordain and establish for the good and well ordering and governing of the freemen of the foresaid art or mystery and of the foresaid society, ordinances, provisions and laws as often as they shall see proper and convenient;

VI. Provided that those ordinances, provisions and laws be in no wise repugnant or contrary to the laws and statutes of this our kingdom of England, or in prejudice to the commonweal of our same kingdom.

VII. And that the same and their successors for ever are enabled and may lawfully and safely without molestation or disturbance of us or the heirs or successors of our foresaid queen, or of any other person, hold, as often as they please, lawful and honest meetings of themselves for the enacting such laws and ordinances, and transact-

ing other business for the benefit of the same mystery or art, and of the same society, and for other lawful causes in the manner aforesaid.

VIII. And that the foresaid master and keepers or wardens and the commonalty of the said mystery or art of a Stationer of the foresaid city, and their successors, or the greater part of them being assembled lawfully and in a convenient place, may yearly for ever, or oftner or seldomer, at such times and places within the said city, as they shall think fit, chuse from amongst themselves, and make one master and two keepers or wardens of the same mystery or art of a Stationer of the foresaid city, to rule, govern and supervise the foresaid mystery and society, and all the men of the same mystery, and their business; and to remove and displace the former master and the former keepers or wardens out of those offices, as they shall see best.

IX. And that if, and as often as, it shall happen in any election that the master and keepers or wardens and the foresaid commonalty are equal in votes, one part against another in such an election, that then and so often the master of the foresaid mystery, if there shall be then any master, or the upper keeper or warden of that mystery, if there shall then be no master, may have two votes in such elections.

X. And that the master and keepers or wardens and commonalty of the foresaid mystery, and their successors for the time being shall be deemed fit and able persons in law as well to give, grant and sell their lands and tenements, possessions, goods and chattels, as to purchase, possess, take and receive for themselves and their successors, lands, tenements, possessions, goods, chattels and inheritances to be had, enjoyed and possessed by themselves and their successors for ever, the statute against putting lands and tenements in mortmain, or any other statute, act or ordinance to the contrary notwithstanding;

XI. Provided that the said lands, tenements and inheritances so to be purchased and to be possessed by them, be within our said city of London or suburbs, or the liberties of the same city; and so that they do not in any wise exceed the yearly value of twenty pounds of lawful money of England.

XII. Moreover we will, grant, ordain and constitute for ourselves and the successors of our foresaid queen that no person within this our kingdom of England or dominions thereof, either by himself or by his journeymen, servants or by any other person shall practise or exercise the art or mystery of printing or stamping any book or thing to be sold or to be bargained for within this our kingdom of England or the dominions thereof, unless the same person is or shall be one of the society of the foresaid mystery or art of a Stationer of the city aforesaid at the time of his foresaid printing or stamping; or has for that purpose obtained our licence or the licence of the heirs and successors of our foresaid queen.

XIII. Moreover we will, grant, ordain and constitute for ourselves, the heirs and successors of our said queen, to the foresaid master, keepers or wardens and the commonalty of the mystery or art of a Stationer

ner of the foresaid city of London, and to their successors for ever, that the foresaid master and keepers or wardens and their successors for the time being shall very lawfully as well search, and as often as they please, any place, shop, house, chamber or building of any stamper, printer, binder or seller of any manner of books within our kingdom of England or dominions thereof, concerning or for any books or things printed, stamped or to be printed or stamped, as seize, take away, have, burn or convert to the proper use of the said society all and singular those books and those things, which are or shall be printed or stamped contrary to the form of any statute, act or proclamation made or to be made.

XIV. And that, if any person shall practise or exercise the foresaid art or mystery contrary to the form above described; or shall disturb, refuse or hinder the foresaid master and keepers or wardens for the time being, or any one of them for the time being to make the foresaid search, or to seize, take away or burn the foresaid books or things, which are, or any one of which has been printed or stamped, or are to be printed or stamped contrary to the form of any statute, act or proclamation, that then the foresaid master or keepers or wardens for the time being shall imprison or send to gaol, or either of them shall imprison or send to gaol every such person so practising or exercising the foresaid art or mystery contrary to the form aforesaid, or so that, as aforesaid the disturber, refuser or hinderer shall there remain without bail or mainprize for the space of three months; and that the same person so practising the art or mystery aforesaid contrary to the said form, or so that, as aforesaid, the disturber, refuser or hinderer shall pay or cause to be paid for every such practising or exercising as aforesaid, contrary to the said form, and for every such disturbance, let or hinderance, one hundred shillings of lawful money of England, one moiety thereof to us, our heirs and successors of the foresaid queen, and the other moiety thereof to the foresaid master, keepers or wardens and commonalty, &c. In witness whereof, the king and queen at Westminster, May 4.

By writ of privy seal, &c.

Queen Elizabeth did by her letters patents confirm the above charter, in the following manner:

The queen to whom these presents, &c. greeting. We have seen the letters patents of the lord Philip, king, and the lady Mary late queen of England our most dearly beloved sister, to the master, keepers or wardens and commonalty of the mystery or art of a Stationer of our city of London, lately granted at Westminster on the 4th day of May, in the 3d and 4th years of their reigns: [Here the charter of Philip and Mary is recited word for word, and confirmed by her as follows:] And we ratifying and allowing the foresaid letters, and all and every thing contained therein, do, as much as in us lies, accept and approve them for ourselves, our heirs and successors, and do ratify and confirm them to our beloved Reynold Wolfe, now the master of the foresaid mystery or art of a Stationer, and Michael Lobley

Lobley and Thomas Duxwell the keepers or wardens of the same mystery, and to their successors in such manner, as the foresaid recited charter and letters do reasonably in themselves testify. In witness whereof, &c. the queen at Westminster, on the tenth day of November, and in the first year of our reign.

Besides this confirmation, the charter of Philip and Mary was twice exemplified by king Charles II. in the years 1667 and 1684.

First Grant.

Letters patents granted to the Company of Stationers, Oct. 29. 1603.

I James I. for the sole printing of Primers, Psalters, Psalms, Almanacks, &c. in English.

James, by the grace of God, &c. to all pryncers, booksellers, and all others to whome, &c. greetynge.

I. K Nowe ye that wee for the helpe and reliefe of our lovyng subjects being of the corporacion of master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the arte or mysterye of Stacyoners of the cittye of London, and of their successors, of our special grace, certain knowledge and mere motion have given and granted and by theis presentes for us, our heires and successors doe gyve and graunte full power, authoritie, pryviledge and lycence unto the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the mystery or arte of Stacyoners of the cittye of London and to their successors for ever to imprynt or cause to be imprynted all manner of booke and bookes of prymers, psalters and psalmes in meter or prose with musycall notes or withoute notes, both in great volumes and small in the Englishe tonge, which now be or at anye tyme hereafter shall be sett for he and permytted by us, our heires or successors or by anye other person or persons thereto by us, our heires or successors authorysed or to be authorysed to be had, used, read and taughte of, by or unto our lovyng subjects throughe oute our realme of England by whatsoever name or names the same booke or bookes or anye of them are or shall be called (the bookes of common prayer usually read or to be read in the churches of England, together with all bookes conteyned in the letters patents of the office of our pryncer graunted to Robert Barker and Cristofer his sonne alwaies excepted and foreprysed) anye other priviledge or anye other order heretofore granted or taken to the contrarie notwithstandinge: straightly inhybytyng and prohybytyng all other the subjects of us, our heires and successors to prynt, utter or sell, or cause to be prynted, uttered or solde anye other booke or books of prymers, psalters and psalmes in the Englishe tonge (except before excepted) then such as shal be by the master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the mystery or arte of Stacyoners of the cittye of London or their successors prynted or caused to be printed accordinge to the true meanyng of thys our present priviledg, uppon payne of forfeiture of all suche bookes as they shall imprynte, utter or sell contrarye to the meanyng hereof; the same booke and bookes, so to be forfeited, to be seized
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uppon and taken by the said master or keepers or wardens and comynaltye of the mystery or arte of Stacyoners of the citty of London and their successors, and uppon such paynes and penalties as may be inflicted uppon suche as contempne and infrynge oure commaundment royall.

II. Wherefore wee will and commaunde all and every the offycers and subjects of us, our heires and successors, as they tender oure favoure and will avoid our displeasure, that they and every of them, yf neede do requyre, do aid and assyste the said master and keepers or wardens and comynaltye of the mystery or arte of Stacyoners of the citty of London and their successors in the due execution of this our graunte and lycence with effecte accordynge to the true intente and meanyng of the same.

III. And futher knowe yee that wee of oure more aboumdante grace, certen knowledge and mere mocion for the better reliefe of the saide corporacion of master and keepers or wardens and commynaltye of the mystery or art of Stacyoners of the citty of London and their successors, of oure especyall grace, certen knowledge and mere mocion have given and graunte and by theis presentes for us, our heires and successors do give and graunte unto the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the mystery or arte of Stacyoners of the citty of London and their successors, full power, priviledg and authoritie, that they the said master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie and their successors shall and may at all tymes, and from tyme to tyme for ever prynte and cause to be prynted all manner of almanacks and prognostycacions whatsoever in the Englishe tonge, and all manner of bookes and pamphletts tendynge to the same purpose, and which are not to be taken or construed other than almanacks or prognostycacions being allowed by the archbushop of Canterbury and bushop of London, or one of them for the tyme beinge, or by such other person or persons as they or either of them for the tyme beinge shall in that behalfe assigne or appoynte, by what names or titles soever the same shall be entituled, named or called, as shal be printed within thys realme of Englande.

IV. Wherefore by these presentes for us, oure heires and successors wee doe straightlye charge, pröhybitte and commaunde all and singler other prynters, bookellers and all other the offycers mynysters and subjects whatsoever of us, oure heires and successors that they or any of them at any tyme or tymes hereafter shal not prynte or cause to be prynted any of the saide almanacks, prognosticacions or any other almanacks or prognostycacions, books or pamphletts in the Englishe tonge tendinge to the same or like purpose, and that may be in any wyse construed and taken as almanacks and prognosticacions by what titles or addycions soever, the same be or shal be intyted or named, nor buy, utter or sell, or cause to be boughte, uttered or solde any other almanacks, prognostycacions or other books in the Englishe tonge tendinge to the same purpose then such only as shall be printed by the said master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the my-

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flery or arte of Stacyoners of the citty of London and their successors upon payne of forfeiture of all such almanacks, books or pamphletts and prognostycacyons as shall be printed, bought, uttered or solde contrary to the lymytacyon and meaninge of theise oure letters patentes, and upon payne of forfeiture of twelve pence for every almanack and prognostycacyon so to be printed, bought, uttered or solde, and also upon such paynes and penalties as may be inflicted upon such as contempne or infrynge oure commaundmente royal, all which saide forfeitures to be to the use of us, our heires and successors.

V. And moreover by theise our letters patentes for us, oure heires and successors wee do will and commaunde all and singuler oure offycers, ministers, and subjects whatsoever, as they tender oure favour and will avoide oure indignacion and dysplea'ure for the contrarye, that they and every one of them (yf need shall requyre) do aide and assiste the saide master and keepers, or wardens and comynaltie and their successors, as well for searchinge of all such person or persons offendinge therein, as in the due exercysinge and execucion of this oure present lycence and pryvyledge with effect, and in all matters incident to the same accordynge to the true meanynge of theis presents.

VI. And further know yee that wee of oure more ample grace, certen knowlege and mere mocion for us, oure heires and successors doe by theise presents graunte unto the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the mystery or arte of Stacyoners of the citty of London and their successors, that the saide master, wardens and assistants of the saide corporacion for the tyme beinge, or the greater parte of them (whereof the master of the said corporacion for the tyme beinge, to be one) shall have full and free lycence, power and authoritye to constitute, ordeyne and make from tyme to tyme such reasonable lawes, ordinances and constitucions, as to them or the greater part of them (whereof the master of the said corporacion for the tyme beinge to be one) shall seem good, profitable, honest and necessary accordynge to their discrecions for the good governmente and direction of the said master and keepers or wardens and comynalty and of their successors in, aboute or concernynge the due execucion of theise our letters patentes.

VII. And that the said master, wardens and assistants for the tyme beinge and their successors, or the greatest parte of them (whereof the master of the said corporacion for the tyme beinge to be one) so often as they shall constitute, ordeyne and make anye such lawes, constitucions and ordynances, as is aforesaid, shall and may impose, assele, ordeyne and provyde such paynes, punishmentes and penalties by imprisonment of body or by fynes and amercementes or by either of them upon all such as shall offende agaynst such lawes, ordynances and constitucions or any of them, as to the said master, wardens and assistants, and their successors, for the tyme beinge, or the greater part of them (whereof the master of the said corporacion for the tyme beinge to be one) shall seem necessary and convenyente for the observation of the saide lawes, ordynances and constitucions: and the same

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fyues and amerciaments from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter shall and may levy, take and have to the use and behoofe of the said master and keepers or wardens and comynaltye and of their successors withoute impedymente of us, our heires or successors, and without any accountp^te therefore to us, our heires or successors to be rendered or made.

VIII. All and singuler which lawes, ordynances and constitucions so, as aforesaid, to be made, wee will to be observed under the paynes therein to be conteyned, so alwayes that the said lawes, ordynances and constitucions be examyned and approved by the chancellor of Englande, treasurer of Englande and cheefe justices of either benches of us, our heires or successors for the tyme beinge or any three of them, and be not contrary or repugnant to the lawes, statutes, rights or customs of our realme of Englande, nor contrary to a decree touching printers and booksellers made in the courte of Starr Chamber the three and twentieth day of June in the eight and twentieth yere of the raigne of Elizabeth late queen of Englande.

IX. And for the avoyding of all confusyon which may happen in and aboute the premisses, our will and pleasure is, and by these presentes for us, our heires and successors wee do will and graunte that the government, order and direccion of all affaires, matters and thinges concernynge the execution of this our graunte and priviledge shall from tyme to tyme and at all tymes for ever remain wholly and firmly in the master, wardens and assistantes of the mystery or arte of Stationers of the citie of London and of their successors or of the greater parte of them, whereof the master of the said corporacion for the tyme beinge to be one. In witness whereof, &c. T. R. apud Harfield xxix die Octobris.

Per Breve de privato Sigillo, &c.

Second Grant.

James, by the grace of God, &c. to all prynters, bookfellers, and all others to whome these presentes shall come, greetynge.

I. **W**Hereas our dear sister Elizabeth late queen of England by her letters patentés under the great seale of England, bearing date at Westminster the six h and twentieth daie of February in the three and thirtieth year of her late reigne, did of her especial grace, certaine knowledge and meere motion, graunt and give licence and priviledge unto her well beloved subject Verney Alley gentleman, and to his assignes in reversion for terme of thirty yeares, to commence and begin immediatelic from and after the death and decease of John Daje and Richard Daje his sonne, by himself or by his assignes to imprint or cause to be imprinted the psalms of David in English meetre, and notes to singe them; the A.B.C with the little catechisme and the catechisme in Englishe and Latine compiled by Alexander Nowell, with all other bookes in Englishe or Latine, which the said Alexander Nowell before that had made or thereafter should make, write or translate, and had or should appoint to be printed by the said Verney Alley or his assignes; and

also all such other bookes whatsoever as the said Verney Alley should imprint, being compiled, translated and set forth by anie learned man at the procurement, costs and charges of the said Verney Alley, soe that no such booke or bookes should be repugnant to the holie scripture or the lawes or orders of this realme, as in, and by the same letters patents maie appeare; which said letters patents the administrators and assignes of the said Verney have assigned and sett over unto certaine persons in trust to the use of the master and keepers or wardens and commynaltie of the arte or mystery of Stacioners of the cittie of London and their successors.

II. And where is also by our letters patents under our great seal of England bearing date at Harfild the nyne and twentieth daie of October, in the first yeare of our reigne of England, France and Ireland, and of Scotland the seven and thirtieth, it is mencioned, that wee for the helpe and reliefe of our lovinge subjects beinge of the corporacion of the master and keepers or wardens and commynaltie of the arte or mystery of Stacioners of the citty of London, and their successors, of our special grace, certaine knowledge and meere mocion have given and graunted full power and authoritie, priviledge and lycence unto the saide master and keepers or wardens and commynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacioners of the citty of London and to their successors for ever to imprint or cause to be imprinted all manner of booke and bookes of primers, psalters and psalmes in meeter or prose with muscal notes or withoute notes, both in great volumes and in small in the Englishe tongue, which then were or at any time after that should be set forth and permitted by us, our heires or successors or by any other person or persons thereto by us, our heires or successors authorized or to be authorized to be had, used, read or taught of, by or unto our lovinge subjects throughout our realme of England by whatsoever name or names the same booke or bookes or anie of ~~them~~ were or shoulde be called (the bookes of common prayer usuallie read or to be read in the churches of Englande, together with all bookes conveyned in the letters patentees of the office of our printer graunted to Robert Parker and Christopher his sonne out of the said recited graunt alwaies excepted and foreprised) with prohibition to all other the subjects of us, our heires and successors to print, utter or sell, or cause to bee printed, uttered or sould anie other booke or bookes of primers, psalters and psalmes in the Englishe tongue (except as in the said recited letters patents is excepted) then such as shoulde bee by the master and keepers or wardens and commynaltie of the arte of Stacioners of the citty of London or their successors printed or caused to be printed accordinge to the true meaneing of the same graunte.

III. And where in and by our said recited letters patents it further mencioned that wee of our more abundant grace, certaine knowledge and meere mocion for the better reliefe of the said corporacion of the master and keepers or wardens and commynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacioners of the citty of London and their successors, did give and graunte unto the saide master and keepers or wardens and commynaltie

mynaltie of the mistery or arte of Stacyoners of the cittie of London and their successors, full power, priviledge and authority, that they the said master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie and their successors should and might at all times, and from time to time for ever printe and cause to be printed all manner of almanacks and prognostications whatsoever in the Englishe tongue, and all manner of bookes and pamphletts tendynge to the same purpose, and which were not to bee taken or construed other then almanacks or prognostications beinge allowed by the archbishoppe of Canterbury and the bishoppe of London, or one of them for the time beinge, or by suche other person or persons as they or either of them for the tyme beinge shoulde in that behalfe assigne or appointe, by what names or titles soever the same should be entituled, named or called, as should be printed within this realme of Englande, with straight commaundement and prohibition to all and singuler other printers, booksellers and all other officers ministers and subjects whatsoever of us, our heires and successors, that they or anie of them at anie time or times after that should not printe or cause to bee printed anie of the said almanacks, prognostications or anie other almanacks or prognostications, bookes or pamphletts in the Englishe tongue tendynge to the same or like purpose, and that mighte bee in anie wise construed and taken as almanacks and prognostications by what titles or addicions soever the same were or should be intituled or named; nor buy, utter or sell, or cause to be boughte, uttered or sould anie other almanacks, prognostications or other bookes in the Englishe tongue tendynge to the same purpose, then such oneie as shoulde bee printed by the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacyoners of the cittie of London and their successors, as in and by the saide recited letters patents more plainelie appeareth, which saide recited letters patents by us graunted the saide master and keepers or wardens of the art or misterie of Stacyoners of the cittie of London have surrendered to us in our court of Chauncerie, and which wee have accepted.

IV. Now know yee that wee for the helpe and reliefe of the saide corporation of master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the arte or misterie of Stacyoners of the cittie of London and their successors, of our special grace, certaine knowledge and meere motion have given and graunted, and by these presents for us, our heires and successors doe give and graunte full power, authoritie, priviledge and licence unto the saide master, and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacyoners of the cittie of London and to their successors for ever, to imprinte or cause to bee imprinted all manner of booke or bookes of prymers, psalters and psalms in meeter or prose with muscalle noates or without noates both in great volumes and in small, in the Englishe tongue, which now bee or at anie time hereafter shall bee sett forth and permitted by us, our heirs or successors, or by anie other person or persons thereto by us, our heirs or successors authorized or to bee authorized, to bee had, reade, used

or taught of, by, or unto our lovinge subjects throughout the realme of Englande by whatsoever name or names the same booke or bookes, or anie of them are or shall bee called, (the booke of common prayer uall e read or to be reade in the churches of Englande, together with all bookes conteyned in the letters p tents of the office of our printer graunted to Robert Barker and Christopher his sonne, other then the saide booke and bookes of prymmers, psalters, psalms in meeter or prose, almanacks, prognostications and bookes and pamphletts tendinge to the same purpose, which are not to bee taken or construed other then almaracks or prognostications, alwaies excepted and foreprised) anie priviledge or any other order heretofore graunted or taken to the contrarie notwithstandinge: straightlie inhibiting and prohibiting all other person or persons whatsoever to printe, utter or sell, or cause to bee printed, uttered or sould, or to be brought into this realme from anie the partes beyonde the seas anie other booke or bookes of prymmers, psalters and psalmes in the Englishe tongue (except before excepted) then suche as shall bee by the master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacioners of the cittie of London, or their successors, printed or caused to bee printed according to the true meaninge of this our present graunt and priviledge, upon paine of forfeiture of all suche bookes, as they shall imprinte, utter or sell contrarie to the meaninge hereof: the same booke or bookes so to bee forfeited to be seised uppon and taken by the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacioners of the cittie of London and their successors to their owne proper use, benefit and behoofe, and uppon such paines and penalties as may be inflicted uppon suche as contemne and infringe our commaundement royall.

V. Wherefore wee will and commaunde all and every the officers and subjects of us, our heires and successors, as they tender oure favoure and will avoide our displeasure, that they and every of them (if neede do require) doe aid and assyste the said master and keepers and wardens and comynaltie of the arte or misterie of Stacioners of the cittie of London, and their successors, in the due execution of this our graunte and lycence with effecte, accordinge to the true intent and meaninge of the same.

VI. And further know yee that wee of our more abundant grace, certain knowledge and meere mocion, for the better reliefe of the saide corporacion of master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacioners of the cittie of London and their successors, of our special grace, certaine knowledge and meere mocion have given and graunted, and by these presents for us, our heires and successors doe give and graunte unto the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stacioners of the cittie of London, and their successors, full power, priviledge and authoritie that they, the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie and their successors shall and maie at all times and from time to time for ever printe and cause to bee printed all manner of almanacks and prognostications
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in the Englishe tongue, and all manner of bookes and pamphletts tendinge to the same purpose, and which are not to be taken and construed other then almanacks or prognostications, being allowed by the arch-bishoppe of Canterburie and bishoppe of London, or one of them for the time beinge, or by suche other person or persons, as they or either of them, for the time beinge, shall in that behalfe assigne or appointe by what names or titles soever the same shall be intitled, named or called, as shall bee printed within this our realme of Englande.

VII. Wherefore by these presents for us, our heires and successors wee doe straightlie charge, prohibite and commaunde all and singular other printers, bookellers and all others the officers, ministers and subjects whatsoever of us, our heires and successors, that they or anie of them at anie time or times hereafter shall not printe or cause to bee printed or brought from the partes beyonde the seas anie of the saide almanackes, prognostications or anie other almanackes or prognostications, bookes or pamphletts in the Englishe tongue, tendinge to the same or like purpose, and that maie be in anie wise construed and taken as almanackes and prognostications by what titles or addicions soever the same bee or shall bee intitled or named, nor buy, utter or sell, or cause to bee boughte, uttered or sould anie other almanackes, prognostications or other bookes in the Englishe tongue tendinge to the same or like purpose then, such onelie as shall bee printed by the said master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stationers of the cittie of London, and their successors, uppon paine of forfeiture of all suche almanackes, bookes, pamphletts and prognostications as shall be printed, bought, uttered or sould contrarie to the lymitacion and meaninge of these our letters patentes, and uppon paine of forfeiture of twelve pence for every almanacke and prognostication soe to bee printed, boughte, uttered or sould, or imported, or brought into this realme from beyonde the seas; and alsoe uppon such paynes and penalties as maie bee inflicted uppon suche as contemne and infringe our commaundemente royall: all which saide forfeitures to bee to the use of us, our heires and successors.

VIII. And moreover by these our letters patents for us, our heires and successors wee doe will and commaunde all and singular our officers, ministers, and subjects whatsoever, as they tender our favour, and will avoide our indignacion and displeasure for the contrarie, that they and everie of them (if neede shall require) doe ayde and assiste the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie and their successors, as well for searchinge of all suche person or persones offending therein, as in the due exercise and execution of this our present licence and priviledge with effect, and in all matters incident to the same, accordinge to the true meaninge of these presents.

IX. And further know yee that wee of our more ample grace, certaine knowledge and meere mocion for us, our heires and successors, doe by these presents graunte unto the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the misterie or arte of Stationers of the
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cittie of London, and their successors, that the saide master, wardens and assistants of the saide corporation for the time beinge, or the greater parte of them (whereof the master of the saide corporation, for the time beinge, to be one) shall have full and free licence, power and authoritie to constitute, ordaine and make from time to time suche reasonable lawes, ordinances and constitucions, as to them or the greater part of them (whereof the master of the said corporation, for the time beinge, to be one) shall seeme good, profitable, honest and necessarie accordinge to their discrecions, for the good governmente and direction of the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie and of their successors in, aboute or concerninge the due execution of these our letters patents:

X. And that the saide master, wardens and assistants for the time beinge, and their successors, or the greatest parte of them (whereof the master of the saide corporation, for the time beinge, to be one) soe often as they shall constitute, ordaine and make anie such laws, constitucions and ordinances, as is aforesaide, shall and maie impose, asseesse, ordaine and provide such paines, punishmentes and penalties, by imprisonment of body or by fines and amerciamentes, or by either of them, uppon all suche as shall offende against such lawes, ordinances and constitucions, or anie of them, as to the said master, wardens and assistants and their successors for the time beinge, or the greater parte of them (whereof the master of the saide corporation for the time beinge to be one) shall seeme necessary and convenient for the observacion of the said lawes, ordinances and constitucions, and the same fines and amerciaments from time to time and at all times hereafter shall and maie leaue, raise and have to the use and behoofe of the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie and of their successors without impedimente of us, our heires, or successors, and withoute anie accompte therefore to us, our heires or successors to bee rendered or made.

XI. All and singuler which lawes, ordinances and constitucions for, as aforesaide, to bee made, wee will to bee observed under the paines therein conteyned. So alwaies that the saide lawes, ordinances and constitucions be alreadye, or shall bee examyned and approved by the chancellor of England, treasurer of Englande and cheefe justices of either benches of us, our heires or successors for the time beinge or anie three of them, and bee not contrarie or repugnant to the lawes, statutes, rightes or customes of our realme of Englande, nor contrarie to the decree touching printers and booksellers made in the courte of Starr Chamber the three and twentieth daie of June in the eighte and twentieth yeare of the raigne of oure saide deere sister Elizabeth late queene of Englande.

XII. And wee alsoe do by these presentes confirme, approve and allowe all and every suche lawes, ordinances and constitucions as by the master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie of the said misterie or anie of Stationers or anie of their predecessors have been constituted, ordeyned and made for the good governmente and direction of the

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the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie and of their successors in, about or concerninge the due execucion of oure former letters patents graunted of the premises or anie of them: and which lawes, ordinaunces and constitucions have been examined and approved by the lord chancellor of Englande, and by the chiefe justices of either benche for the tme beinge under theire handes and seales.

XIII. And for the avoideinge of all confusion which maie happen in and aboute the premises, our will and pleasure is, and by these presentes for us, oure heires and successors wee do will and graunte that the government, order and direccion of all affaires, matters and thinges concerninge the execuci n of this our graunte and priviledge shall from time to time and at all times for ever remaine wholie and firmelie in the master, wardens and assistants of the misterie or arte of Stacioners of the cittie of London, and of theire successors, and of the greater parte of them (whereof the master of the said corporacion for the time beinge to bee one).

XIV. And wee further will and graunte for us, oure heires and successors, that this oure presente graunte shall bee good and availeable against us, our heires and successors, notwithstandinge anie misrecitall or not-recitall of anie former grunte or grauntes of the premises or anie of them to anie person or persons whatsoever; and notwithstandinge anie misnameinge, not true nameinge or not nameinge of anie of the premises or of anie of them; although expresse mencion of the certaintie of the premises or of anie of them, or of anie other giftes or grauntes by us, or anie our progenitors or pre'eecessors to the saide master and keepers or wardens and comynaltie heretofore made in these presentes, is not expresse; or anie other or former graunte by us or anie our progenitors heretofore had, made or done, or mentioned to bee had, made or done to anie other person or persons whatsoever or anie statute, acte, ordinance, provision, proclamacion or restraunte to the contrarie thereof had, made, ordeyned or provided or anie other matter, cause or thinge whatsoever to the contrarie notwithstandinge. In witness, &c. Witness ourself at Westminster the eighte daie of Marche. Per Breve de Privato Sigillo, &c.

Thus, gentlemen, I have laid before you, the Charter and Grants made for your benefit; and it may not be amiss here to assign the following reasons for the r republication.

First, I was induced thereto, from what passed between me and Mr. N— in the year 1741, when he made me a present of the copies of the above Charter and Grants.—Coming to his house, to put an advertisement into the L. E. he very facetiously said to me: Sir, have you seen, the book of the Charter granted to the company of Stationers, and of the several Grants for printing, uttering and selling Primers, Psalters, Psalms, Almanacks, and the A. B. C. with the Little Catechism, and the Catechism in English and Latin, &c. by Alexander Nowell, made for the sole benefit of the freemen? To this

this I readily replied, that I had heard of it, but had not yet seen it, expressing at the same time my desire of seeing, and being possessed of one of them. Worthy Mr. N— on this, immediately stepped into an adjoining room, and, returning, gave, into my hand, the book, making use of the following expressions and compliments: We (meaning, as I then supposed, himself and the other worthy gentlemen equally concerned in the compilation and publication of the book of the Charter and Grants) usually sell it for two shillings and six pence: but I make it a present to you, because I know you have a great regard for the rights and privileges, and profits and benefits of the freemen; adding, that he was sure I would make a good use of it; meaning, as I have since concluded, that I should make a good use of the knowledge I might or should acquire by reading the book of the Charter and Grants he gave me. To answer the expectations of Mr. N— the worthy donor (or rather worthy donors) as far as I am able, and to render the aforesaid book of the Charter and Grants thus generously given to me, of general use to my brother-freemen, I have here reprinted the Charter and Grants of the Company of Stationers, which is the substance of Mr. N—'s book, and propose to give gratis to every freeman of the said company a printed copy thereof.

Another, and the main reason which has, upon mature deliberation, determined me to republish your royal Charter and Grants is, that every one of you may have a COPY of them in your own possession, that you may read, deliberate on, and consider the importance of the rights and privileges, profits and emoluments, which have heretofore by the Kings and Queens of England been granted unto you, to your children, and to your successors: and that you may from such reading, deliberation and consideration be stimulated unanimously to stand by, encourage, and support one another in the speedy recovery of your chartered rights and privileges, your profits and emoluments, of which you have formerly been illegally, contrary to your Charter, and to the plain and express meaning of your royal Grants, unjustly deprived by a set of men, and their descendants, who have filled their own pockets, and the pockets of their friends and relations at the expence of most of you their brethren from time to time.—Your case has been carefully drawn up, fairly stated, and, together with your royal Charter and Grants, laid before council, and opinions thereon procured. And to render the success of this beneficial and chartered undertaking more certain, easy and expeditious, the manner in which you should proceed to obtain your royal rights and profits council hath also prescribed.

Since I have been engaged in this undertaking, it has been objected, that the completion thereof would not be obtained without undergoing a tedious and expensive law-suit. The objectors have been shown, and fully convinced, that this great and useful undertaking may be readily and easily procured without going to law, without the least

least expence, and without the subscription or contribution of one single farthing. Nothing is wanted of the body of the freemen, but unanimity and proper attendance at those meetings which will be proposed; and as a consequence of those meetings, a firm and becoming resolution to carry the point or points then agreed on into execution.

It has likewise been objected, that the freemen have by many by-laws made by themselves, in common-hall assembled, parted with their power, with the free disposal of their rights and liberties, and since have quietly submitted themselves to be governed at the discretion of a few, and their successors, who have also ever since chosen whom they pleased to share with them in the honours and profits of the company.

The Publishers of your Charter and Grants in the year 1741 intimate, that they had seen and perused these by-laws, and they give of them the following character: "There are, say they, three parcels
" of by-laws, every one of which is calculated to establish an arbitrary and tyrannical government in the company." They have recited one (Pref. p. 12.) relative to a court of assistants, in these words:

" It is likewise ordained, that the full and absolute power of nomination and election of master, wardens and assistants, members of the livery, and of all other officers of the said society, shall always be and remain as usually heretofore hath been, only in the master, wardens and assistants of the said society or the major part of them in a court or courts of assistants assembled; in which nomination and choices they shall observe the ancient ways, time and method of nomination and election which have heretofore been observed and used in the said society."

This by-law is in itself null and void, and no way obligatory on the present freemen, because it is directly contrary to the express words of the Charter, which says:

" And that the foresaid master and keepers or wardens and the commonalty of the said mystery or art of a Stationer of the foresaid city, and their successors, or the greater part of them, being assembled lawfully and in a convenient place, may yearly for ever, or oftner or seldomer, at such times and places, within the said city, as they shall think fit, chuse from amongst themselves, and make one master and two keepers or wardens of the same mystery or art of a Stationer of the foresaid city, to rule, govern and supervise the foresaid mystery and society, and all the men of the same mystery, and their business; and to remove and displace the former master and the former keepers or wardens out of those offices, as they shall see best."

Again, the above objection, founded on the by-law, can be of no force at this time, since as the afore said gentlemen have shown, (p. 24, 25.) the charter granted by king Charles the second in the last year of his reign, for the establishment of a court of assistants,

was repealed, and declared null and void to all intents and purposes in the second year of the reign of king William the third. So that there remains now in force only the Charter granted us in the third and fourth of Philip and Mary made in the year 1556.

Observations on reading the Charter.

1. That the rights and privileges granted by the Charter of Philip and Mary do belong and appertain to all the freemen of the company of Stationers at large.
2. That the choice and election of master, keepers or wardens is the right of all the freemen of the said company annually assembled for that purpose in their common hall.
3. That the present method of choosing master, keepers or wardens by a few of the members of the said company, is contrary to the said Charter, and is an infringement and violation of the said right of election in every and all of the rest of the freemen of the said company.
4. That the institution of the office of renterwarden is unchartered; and that it is a palpable oppression and injury done to the freemen of the said company, by obliging six of them annually to fine or serve for the said office, viz. four to pay the sum of 24 l. each, to be excused from serving the said office of renterwarden, and two to be at the expence of eighteen or twenty pounds each in serving it, besides their attendance. But what is more to be wondered at is, that the junior liverymen should thus tamely suffer themselves to be imposed on, when this office is not chartered, and that the by-law made for the institution thereof some time about the thirty-fifth year of the reign of king Charles the second, in the year 1682 doth not, nor cannot bind us their successors, as it is in itself illegal and unjust. It is unreasonable, that two freemen should be at the charge of the feast on lord mayor's day. If the livery will have a feast on that day, every one that comes to that feast ought to pay his part or equal charge thereto, as is now done in one of the livery companies of this city, where every person designing to come pays his four shillings, and what is wanting is advanced out of the company's stock.
5. That every member or freeman of the said company of Stationers has a right to read all the papers, writings, evidences, by-laws, records, wills of donors, and all other memorandums belonging to the said company. According to this right, granted by the above Charter of Philip and Mary, a certain freeman of the said company of Stationers, did, on the second day of February last, attend on the present master and wardens at Stationers-hall, and desired, That he might be permitted to read all the writings, papers, evidences, by-laws, records, wills of donors, and every other memorandum in the company's chest, in the possession of the master and wardens. The clerk having made a minute of his request, the master desired the free-
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man to withdraw. After a short time, being called in, the clerk informed him, That the court had taken into consideration his request, and that they finding it was of a general nature they had therefore rejected it. Whereupon the freeman stated this fact, and laid the same before council, who returned in writing: "That every freeman of any one of the companies of the city of London, had an undoubted right to read the records, papers, writings, evidences, by-laws, wills of benefactors, belonging to his company, (for therefore were they made and preserved) and that the Court of King's Bench would on a motion grant the party refused, being a member of such company, a *ma dāmus* to the master and wardens to shew cause of such refusal." Pursuant to this opinion, the freeman, on the second of March, attended the master and wardens, and then renewed his request recited above of the second of February, at the same time informing them of the opinion of the council. But the master and wardens declared, that they would abide by their former resolution, and absolutely refused the said freeman reading the records of his company.

6. General observation. From all which it does fully, plainly and evidently appear, that the Charter of the third and fourth of Philip and Mary has not only absolutely fixed and settled the right and power of the election of the master and wardens in the then body of freemen at large, but it has entailed that right on their successors for ever; and admitting it may have ever been in the inclination of any of the members, it never could have been in their power to defeat or give up that right, which was theirs only for life, and which the Charter has fixed and entailed on their successors for ever.

It is therefore proposed, and it is hereby desired, that a Previous Meeting be held of all the freemen of the company of Stationers, on Monday the thirty first of May next (being Whit-monday) at the Dog-tavern on Garlick-hill, at three o'clock in the afternoon, for the nomination of three persons to be chosen master and wardens of the company of Stationers for the year ensuing, at Stationers-hall in Ludgatestreet, on the usual day of election, being Saturday the third day of July following, at ten o'clock in the forenoon: At both which times and places all the freemen are desired to attend.

N. B. At the Previous Meeting many other reasons will be offered to induce the freemen to meet on the third of July next at Stationers-hall, for the election of master and wardens for the year ensuing, which, on account of their number and length, cannot so conveniently be inserted here.

Observations on reading the GRANTS.

1. That the profits of the trade of the company of Stationers belong to the members thereof, without regard had to whether the parties be liverymen or yeomen; and that the profits should accrue to each member, according to his seniority or time of admission into the freedom; for it is expressly said in the preamble to the first Grant, That the sole right

right of printing and vending primers, psalters and almanacs, is granted to the corporation of master and keepers or wardens and commonalty of the art or mystery of Stationers of the city of London, and of their successors for ever. And though the company of Stationers was made a livery company about fifty years before the date of the said Grants, yet it is observable that the word liveryman is not once used therein, and that nothing is more certain, than that it never was the design of the Grants to confine the profits of the trade to the livery only. Yet such has been the contrivance of a few, that for these sixty years past, the yeomen have had no share in the profits of the trade of the company, nor have they received the least advantage therefrom.

5. The profits of the Grants have been made for above fifty years past only a trap, to induce the moneyed or ambitious yeoman to come on the livery at the expence of 20 l. besides fees, and to serve the burdensome office of rentwarden, or pay a fine of 24 l. to be excluded therefrom. Now this usage of the yeomen is quite contrary to the express meaning of the Grants, the profits and advantages whereof were never intended to be a monopoly.

6. The profits of the trade of the company were divided of old in this manner. By authority taken that soon after the company of Stationers had obtained the above Grants, it was found necessary to constitute, for the carrying the benefit of the same into execution, a capital stock of 20,000 l. and it was then proposed to raise the said capital by the three following parts or proportions. That the first division or proportion of the capital should be raised by all those who had or were serving the offices of master and wardens, and that the said proportion should be divided into fifteen shares, and that each person entitled to a share should pay into the joint stock the sum of 300 l. which would raise the first wanted sum of 4,500 l. this stock is now called an assistant's share. That another of the proportions should be raised by the livery, which they divided into thirty shares, at the sum of 160 l. each, which would raise the second wanted sum of 4,800 l. this stock is now called a livery share. And that the third or last capital division be raised by the yeomen, who were to have the profits and benefits accruing therefrom among themselves, for this the yeomen were to raise the last required capital sum of 4,800 l. which was done by sixty shares of 80 l. each, this stock is now called a yeoman's share. But the number of the members of the company increasing, thirty of these last shares were divided, and sixty half yeoman's shares made, now called 40 l. shares, which have been increased, but in what proportion we have not been able as yet to learn.

4. One of the by-laws made for the better regulation of the trade of the company says, That the body of the members at large shall meet in the common hall of the company of Stationers, on the first day of March annually, for the choice of a treasurer, and of six stock-keepers for the year ensuing.

Excudebat, edebat, donabat Jacob Iluv, anno MDCLXII.



